

Seattle held its eighth "Disaster Saturday" at a school that had been retrofitted with non-structural seismic retrofits as part of the city's "Project Impact's School Retrofit" program. I share Senator MURRAY's appreciation for FEMA's work, as well as her concern over the proposed cancellation of this important disaster mitigation program.

Since its inception in 1997, nearly 250 community partners and 2,500 business partners across the country have joined with Project Impact. In my own State of Hawaii, all four counties are community partners to Project Impact. The 50th State is vulnerable to risks from hurricanes, torrential rains and flooding, tsunamis, droughts, earthquakes, and even wildland fires. Urban areas like Houston, TX and Tulsa, OK, as well as rural communities, like Fremont County, WY, largely rural area of about 38,000 residents, and Virginia's Central Shenandoah Valley Planning District, have joined.

Kenai Peninsula Borough and Soldotna, AK are educating their citizens about mitigation measures that can be taken to prevent damage from earthquakes, wildfires and floods. The city of Buffalo, which lies on a major fault, has joined Project Impact to help with earthquake mitigation, as well damage from snow storms and floods. A few months ago, North Carolina was named the Outstanding Disaster-Resistant State in recognition for all the work that has been done in communities across the State. In Colorado, a \$150,000 grant to a coalition in San Luis Valley was leverage into a \$268,000 Emergency Preparedness Fund. Other Colorado communities that have benefited include Fort Collins, Delta and Clear Creek, Morgan and El Paso counties. In Elgin, IL, Project Impact helped start a pilot program to mitigate the effects of tornadoes.

Project Impact's full title is "Project Impact: Building Disaster-resistant Communities." The initiative works by empowering communities to fashion hazard mitigation responses to local concerns and needs. FEMA helps communities carry out a detailed risk assessment and create disaster resistant strategies. Communities turn these strategies into policy by revising local building and land use codes and passing bond issues to construct prevention measures that will impact the entire community.

Project Impact operates on three simple principles: preventive action must be decided at local levels, private sector participation is vital, and long-term efforts and investments in prevention measures are essential. Project Impact takes resources from a Federal agency and gives it to the communities, helping them to become stronger and self-reliant.

Since its inception, Project Impact partners have revamped their local

emergency management plans, elevated flood prone properties, developed mobile demonstration models for hazard resistant construction techniques and upgraded storm water drainage systems. In addition, Project Impact communities are encouraged to exchange ideas with each other. As former FEMA director James Lee Witt stated, "... participants know that Project Impact empowers them to save lives, protect property, protect their economies, livelihoods and save their citizens from the heartache of disaster."

Everything that I hear about Project Impact points to its successes. NASA, the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the Humane Society have all become Project Impact signatories in the past few months. Although the President's budget proposal states that Project Impact has not been effective, it is unclear how that conclusion was reached. We should not eliminate a program without reviewing its successes or failures. In order to evaluate Project Impact, I am requesting that the General Accounting Office review the program and measure its performance. It is only right that there be an audit of this program, which so many communities believe is an important government partnership, before eliminating its funding.

FEMA estimates that for every dollar spent on disaster mitigation, two dollars are saved in disaster response and recovery. I sincerely hope that the Project Impact communities will not be left without any Federal assistance for disaster mitigation. Roger Faris, a Seattle homeowner who thanked Project Impact for his home surviving Wednesday's earthquake without damage, said, "This is one of these non-partisan success programs that should have been expanded, not shut off."

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### OKLAHOMA SOONER WOMEN'S SOFTBALL 2000 NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

• Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate the Oklahoma Sooners softball team, which on September 19, defeated UCLA by a score of 3-1 to win the first women's national championship at the University of Oklahoma.

The championship game was played at Amateur Softball Association Hall of Fame Stadium in Oklahoma City, where the Sooners softball team closed out the year with a 66-8 record; 8 of these victories were consecutive wins during the NCAA Tournament.

The Sooners women were led to this championship by Patty Gasso, who was recognized as Coach of the Year, along with her assistants, Melyssa Panzer, Tim Walton and Jennifer Jamie, all of

whom were recognized as the 2000 Speedline/NFCA Division 1 National Coaching Staff of the Year. Gasso, just finished her sixth season as head of the Sooners softball program. She has guided each of her teams to the NCAA Regional play-offs and won three Big 12 Conference championships.

From the entire State, we want to congratulate the University of Oklahoma women's softball team and their first-class coaching staff on this outstanding achievement.●

##### IN RECOGNITION OF BERNICE WILLIAMS

• Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Mrs. Bernice Williams as she retires after a distinguished 45 year career in the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Throughout this time, she has been of great service to both her nation and her community.

Mrs. Williams' accomplished a great deal during her tenure at the INS. In 1968 she had the distinction of becoming the first African American female officer for the Northern New Jersey office of the Department of Immigration. Since then, she has taken on many important roles in the INS such as serving as manager for EEO and Affirmative Action Programs and Projects as well as the Senior Immigration Examiner on sensitive political asylum cases.

Whether dealing with a timely asylum case or helping those in need in her community, Mrs. Williams has been selfless in everything she approaches. She is a member of the A. Philip Randolph Association and works through the Giblin Association to provide food and clothing to the less fortunate. She has also worked as a tutor for local children, helping to ensure a brighter future for our students. In these and countless other ways, she has given graciously of herself. In every aspect of her life, Mrs. Williams has exemplified the meaning of good citizenship.

The INS and the community of Newark have truly been blessed to have an individual as dedicated, talented and generous as Bernice Williams. It is a privilege to recognize her many accomplishments today.●

##### TRIBUTE TO JOHN CRADDOCK

• Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the efforts of a dedicated public servant, Mr. John Craddock of Muncie, IN.

As the Director of the Bureau of Water Quality for the City of Muncie for almost 30 years, Mr. Craddock has made a meaningful contribution to improving the quality of life for the people in Indiana and the Nation through his work to improve water quality for our cities.